

### **REMARKS**

The Office Action dated June 30, 2004 has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

Upon entry of this Response, claims 1-7 and 12-18 will be pending in the present application. Claims 1, 5, 12, and 16 are independent claims. Claims 8-11 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 2 and 15 have been amended exclusively for the purpose of clarity and have not been amended in view of any prior art. No new matter has been added and no new issues are raised which require further consideration or search. Upon entry of this Response, all of the pending claims will have previously been allowed.

#### **Rejection of Claims 8-11 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e):**

Claims 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,862,490 to Sasuta et al. (Sasuta '490). However, the cancellation of claims 8-11 renders this rejection moot.

#### **Allowed Subject Matter:**

Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 1-7 and 12-18.

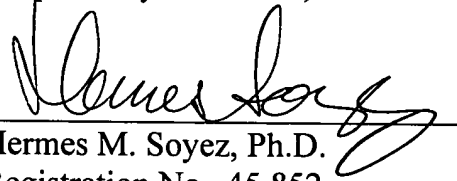
The rejection included in the Office Action has been rendered moot. Also, Applicant points out that, upon entry of this Response, all of the claims pending in the

present application will have previously been allowed. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that this application be passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the Applicant's undersigned representative at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hermes M. Soyez', is written over a horizontal line.

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